



THE COMMUNICATOR

Grant County Employee Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1
April 2003

An Employee Newsletter? What A Great Idea!

Joyce Roling; Personnel Director



This is the first of a Newsletter to be distributed quarterly - January, April, July and October.

You will find loads of valuable information! From employee benefits to words from the County Board Chair.

This newsletter will be

used as a communication tool. Oftentimes we find ourselves too busy to catch the latest informational postings or attend meetings. This newsletter can be something you can take home and read later. This is not just for the Administration to convey information, but for the employees as well.

Did you know Grant County employs about 500 people? Who are they and what do

In this quarter's issue...

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they do? Each Newsletter will have a guest columnist. This person will share with us information about what their job is and the importance of it.

Do you have something you want to share? Let us know.

Anyone wishing to have a specific subject discussed in a future newsletter, may contact the Grant County Personnel Department at (608)723-2540.

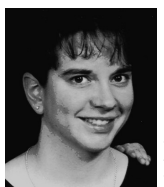


Have you ever wondered why we celebrate April Fool's Day?

The origin of April Fool's Day is actually connected to New Year's Day. Many cultures observed spring rituals on April 1 and viewed that date as the coming of the renewal of the earth and life thus looking upon this date as the beginning of the new year. Later the calendar was changed and New Year's Day was celebrated on January 1. There were some people who didn't know about or didn't believe in the change and continued to celebrate on April 1. Others played tricks on them and called them "April fools."

Benefit Highlights

Dawn Mergen; Personnel Specialist



DENTAL

Fortis Benefits Inc. This is a 100% employee paid plan using pre-tax earnings. Two plan levels are offered to eligible employees. The Basic plan provides coverage for many common dental services and the Advanced plan offers additional benefits. Services may be provided by any dentist. If a treatment plan exceeds \$300, it should be submitted for an estimate of benefits payable. Vision discounts are also available from some providers.

LIFE INSURANCE

Mutual of Omaha. Grant County pays 100% of the premium for eligible employees of a \$10,000 Life and Accidental Death Dismemberment Policy. Life insurance benefits reduce by 50% at age 70. If employment ends, an individual policy of life insurance may be applied for without providing health information. Life insurance benefits may also be continued at no cost when an employee is totally disabled for at least nine months.

LTD OR STD DISABILITY

National Insurance Services. Grant County provides either a long term or short term disability plan on each eligible employee. What's the difference? Short term has an eight day waiting period before it begins payments and the payments are \$100 per week for up to 26 weeks of total disability. Long term has a six month waiting period and the benefit is equal to about 66% of your monthly income while you are totally disabled. This is a great benefit after sick leave is used up.

On-The-Job Injuries

Worker's Compensation provides benefits to employees who are injured on the job or develop an occupational disease.

All accidents, no matter how small, must be reported to your supervisor immediately even if you plan not to seek medical attention. The reason for this is to provide accurate details regarding the injury to prevent compensation delays if unforeseen complications arise.

*A safe workplace
is a happy workplace!*

Benefit Highlights continued...

WISCONSIN RETIREMENT

Grant County contributes a percentage to the Wisconsin Retirement Fund based on your wages. All eligible employees are automatically enrolled in this. You have the option of having 50% of your funds put in a variable account. Employees receive a report of their account annually, usually in May. If you need current account information, you may contact the Department of Employee Trust Funds at 1-877-533-5020.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Eligible employees may choose Dean Health Plan or Medical Associates HMO. Grant County pays 100% of single coverage and 85% of family coverage. Coverage details can be found in each plan's schedule of benefits and all service providers must be plan approved. Benefits also include discounts from some fitness clubs through Dean and a mail order prescription drug discount as well as eyewear benefits through Medical Associates.

FLEXIBLE SPENDING

The County's Section 125 Plan (EBC Flex) allows you to use Flexible Spending Accounts to pay for IRS-approved expenses with pre-tax dollars. This plan can be used to pay for Group Medical Premiums, Health Care (Medical Reimbursement), Dependent Care, and Individual Premiums. This is a great way to save money on contact lenses and supplies, dental expenses, eyeglasses, laser eye surgery, hearing aids, and orthodontic care.

Meet the County Board Chair...



Eugene Bartels is the Chair of the Grant County Board of Supervisors. Chairperson Bartels was the Clerk/Treasurer/

Assessor for the Village of Potosi for 34 years. He became a Grant County Board Supervisor in 1994 and became Chairperson in 1998. His office is located in the Grant County Administration Building.

Chairperson Bartels represents the County Board, oversees large County projects, and represents Grant County at public functions.

During Chairperson Bartels' term in office, the Muscoda Incinerator and the old Orchard Manor building were demolished. The County hosted Farm Progress Days, The old Health Department, previously known as the old jail, was razed and the new Administration Building was erected in its place. The Grant County Courthouse was remodeled and expanded. Mr. Bartels is currently focusing on a Smart Growth Plan and on a Regional Jail Project.

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Guest Columnist

Linda Adrian, Director/Health Officer



The Grant County Health Department provides for the health and safety of all

the residents of Grant County according to Wisconsin Statutes.

Public Health Programs promote prevention and early detection of disease. Services included: communicable disease follow-up; immunizations; health screenings (children and adults), WIC, CPR, health counseling and assessment for families with

children, and environmental health services to protect the environment. Services are delivered in homes, schools, community and at clinic sites.

Home Care clients receive care from nurses, aids, physical therapists, occupational therapists and speech therapist in their homes as ordered by the homebound clients, family and health care providers.

The Hospice Program provides care for the terminally ill patients and their families at home, hospital or nursing home. This includes pain management, nursing, aides,

nutrition education and emotional support as ordered by the health care providers for the patient.

The Health Department staff serves as a resource to anyone with problems or concerns about health related issues.

Bio-terrorism planning and prevention with Emergency Government, Law Enforcement, fire departments, EMS, hospitals, and elected officials is the newest program for the Health Department.

Smallpox

Smallpox is a serious, contagious and sometimes fatal infectious disease. The last case of smallpox in the United States occurred in 1949 and the U.S. stopped routine smallpox vaccination in 1972 because the risks of the vaccine were greater than the risk of the smallpox disease occurring in the U.S. The last naturally occurring case of smallpox in the world occurred in Somalia in 1977. The disease was declared eradicated worldwide in 1980.

Wisconsin is finalizing details to offer smallpox vaccination to volunteer members of response teams from hospitals and public health departments statewide. These teams would provide care and treatment for patients with suspected smallpox and investigate cases of suspected smallpox. Hospital and public health workers who volunteer to receive the vaccine will be monitored closely.

Smallpox vaccine does NOT contain the smallpox virus and cannot cause the smallpox disease. The vaccinia virus in the vaccine can be transmitted to another person from someone who has been vaccinated only through contact with the drainage from the vaccination site, not through the air. Hospital and public health workers will have their vaccination site checked at work on a daily basis until the scab falls off the vaccination site—usually two to three weeks after vaccination. The vaccination site will be covered by a protective dressing and bandage and the vaccinee will be trained to properly care for their vaccination site both at work and at home.

Currently, it is not recommended that the general public be vaccinated against smallpox. In case of an actual attack or outbreak, health care providers and public health workers will be ready to provide vaccinations to the general public.

Our state has a smallpox vaccination plan so if there is a smallpox outbreak, Wisconsin will be able to vaccinate the general public very quickly. The smallpox vaccination is effective if given within four days after exposure to a person with the smallpox disease.

For more information on smallpox vaccination or the smallpox disease, please contact the Grant County Health Department at (608) 723-6416.